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from 2 to 10 billion lei (in quantity from one million to 2.2 million metric tons).

Two qualifications should be made however. The emphasis upon wheat exports and upon the improvement of quality was primarily for the benefit of the middle and large producer, though the maintenance of the price of grain did help agriculture as a whole. In the second place, as has been mentioned in connection with the depression, the premiums on wheat served to extend the area under wheat cultivation, in direct contradiction to the recommendations of agricultural experts, who continued to believe that "peasant agriculture should no longer limit itself, in imitation of the old system, to the culture of cereals; its success will come from a parallel development of the resources of the field and of livestock raising."[38] This contradiction, which shows the absence of any real coherence to the agrarian program of the Liberal government, had two obvious sources: wheat, for all its decline after the First World War, was important commercially and from the point of view of foreign commerce there was a strong incentive to support it. Moreover, the wheat growers were the larger farmers and were in a better position to make felt their wishes than were the small maize-producing peasants.

The government did, however, make certain efforts to increase the variety of agricultural production. The most elaborate was the creation, with the assistance of I. G. Farbenindustrie, of the "Soya" company, which was authorized to import soybeans, distribute them to cultivators, provide equipment, and purchase the entire crop for export to Germany. The area under this crop expanded rapidly, especially in Bessarabia: 1,465 hectares in 1934, 20,411 hectares in 1935, 58,037 hectares in 1936, and 102,000 hectares in 1937. The government through price guarantees and subsidies also furthered the cultivation of sugar beet, tobacco, rice, and textile plants.

These measures to diversify agriculture did not, despite all the publicity given to them, achieve very great importance. They were only a drop in the bucket compared with the vast area under peasant cereal cultivation, and their rate of expansion seemed unlikely to produce any general amelioration for a very long time. Moreover, the introduction of such industrial crops, whose main purpose—almost exclusively so in the case of soya—was for export, shows the persistent if natural effort to solve the agrarian question by a sort of legerdemain. The soybean had been an old favorite, and as early

38. G. Ionescu-Sisești and N. Cornățeanu, *La Réforme agraire en Roumanie et ses conséquences*, p. 78.

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241 as 1910 Dobrogeanu-Gherea had some harsh words to say of the
433 men who thought it could magically solve the deep-rooted ills of Ru-
● 654 manian agriculture.[36]

The Tătărescu government, following precedent, also reorganized agricultural credit and the cooperative system, set up more experimental stations, and devoted funds to the raising of better livestock and the purchase of tractors, but those measures seem to have been only of marginal benefit.

423 The government did try in the law of March, 1937, for the encouragement of agriculture to grapple with the problem of land tenure. It regulated the transfer and mortgage of rural lands and undertook to enforce the indivisibility of property as a means of preventing the progressive subdivision of peasant holdings. The effort was unsuccessful. The two-hectare minimum, which in any case was too small for a self-subsistent holding, was not observed; the prohibition extended only to properties obtained from the state or with the state's assistance. An attempt was also made to promote the consolidation of peasant properties, but this met with too great opposition in the chamber and was dropped.[37] The government also exerted its right of preemption on sales of agricultural land for the purpose of providing land for the peasants but its achievements were insignificant. Between April 1, 1934, and August 1, 1938, of the 326,200 hectares put on sale the government used its right of preemption on only 12,250 hectares, 3.8 per cent of the total.[38]

241 In brief, if the position of agriculture was somewhat better in the
654 years of the Tătărescu regime than in the depression it was largely
656 a consequence of general economic recovery. Agriculture did benefit from the protective measures applied and extended by the government, although part of these benefits was lost by the continued depreciation of the leu, and some efforts were made to raise the level of agriculture and diversify production. Nevertheless, the government's chief interest was industry and commerce and the principal benefits to agriculture were those which corresponded to this interest. The desperate problem of the millions of small peasants owning less than 3 hectares, unable to support themselves and their families, dividing their land into smaller and smaller fragments, suffering from pellagra —this problem was scarcely touched.

654 It must be said, however, that in the 1930's there was a notable
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36. C. Dobrogeanu-Gherea, *Neoiobăgia*, p. 284.

37. Valeriu Bulgaru, "Divizibilitatea proprietăţii ţărăneşti," *Problema agrară* (Bucarest, 1946), pp. 77–87.

38. G. Ionescu-Sisești, "Le Nouvel Aspect du problème agraire en Roumanie," *Revue pour la science et la réforme agraires*, *16*, Nos. 1-4 (1942), 264.

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increase in scientific investigations of village life—sociological studies undertaken by Professor Gusti and his students, farm accountancy studies, examinations of rural health and diet—which brought into clear light the deplorable living conditions of the peasants. It was at this time too that the factor of overpopulation was brought into prominence, although as early as 1907 Constantin Garoflid had warned of its approach. Unfortunately, the real fact of overpopulation was too easily employed as a scapegoat, and one finds a growing tendency from the middle of the 1930's to place upon it all the responsibility for the plight of the peasant.

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642 and a couple of days later, with the agreement of Maniu and Constantin Brătianu, demanded his abdication. Carol fled the country, with Mme Lupescu and Colonel Urdareanu, the core of his camerilla. For Rumania, however, the absurd result was that popular indignation over the loss of Transylvania at the hands of the Axis merely placed in power an ardently pro-Axis government which immediately recognized the Vienna Decree.

Economic and Agrarian Policy

178 In the economic sphere the years of the Carolist dictatorship show four important characteristics:

1) a continued emphasis upon industrialization;

2) a reaction against small peasant agriculture and a growing agricultural paternalism;

3) increasing regimentation of the economy, both for economic planning and for military preparedness;

4) the growing dominance of Germany in Rumanian economic life.

The policy of industrialization which had got under way after the depression continued its course of expansion under the dictatorship, with the additional stimulus of the menace of war. After the outbreak of war the restriction of trade channels and raw material imports reduced industrial production somewhat. The loss of territory in 1940 produced, of course, a general dislocation of the economy. Industrial policy, however, was merely the culmination of the whole trend of the Carolist regime.

In the field of agrarian policy there was a noticeable reaction against small peasant holdings and renewed talk of creating a middle peasantry. As has been seen, the policy of all Rumanian governments on this question has been confused and contradictory. The National Peasants in 1929, by relaxing regulations for the transfer of peasant property, had hoped to create more prosperous and self-sustaining holdings, but their action had rather the effect of dispossessing the small peasant. On the other hand, the debt conversions of 1932–34 had the opposite effect and in a negative way were, as Garoflid called them, a new peasant resettlement in that they limited the effect of the economic crisis in weeding out the weaker peasants. The Tătărescu government had attempted to colonize relatively underpopulated areas with medium holdings and by the law of 1937 had tried, ineffectually, to check the subdivision of land.

642 654 Under the Carol dictatorship somewhat more extensive measures

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were initiated, at least on paper. The 1938 Constitution, by prohibiting any public discussion of redistribution of property, showed the regime's attitude toward further expropriation as a remedy to the agrarian question. During the interwar years the governments were accustomed to state that large estates had virtually disappeared through the reforms of 1918–21, but after 1938 increased attention was paid to medium and large properties.[4] In the law of December 5, 1938 (amended January 7, 1939) the government established a Bank for the Industrialization and Valorization of Agricultural Products (BINAG), one of the recurrent efforts to provide agricultural credit. It is to be noted, however, that by Article 6 of this law the main credit functions of this bank applied only to farms of over 5 hectares, thus overlooking the majority of the peasantry.[5]

The spirit of the regime is well shown in an article by the agricultural economist Valeriu Bulgariu,[6] who announced that King Carol, "the first farmer in the land," had plans to change completely the existing conditions in agriculture by a twofold effort to organize small farming on rational lines and to encourage owners of medium-sized estates to increase the area of their holdings.

> When the great land division took place after the war, the agrarian reform went too far. . . . It assigned land to a very large number of villagers, and as a result subsequent successive divisions had increased the excessive subdivision of land. Reaction was necessary, and to-day economists and sociologists are in favor of the concentration of scattered property, a policy adopted by the government and all its agents.[7]

The desirability of concentrating peasant holdings was no new discovery, and Carol's regime for all its new direction was not a bit more successful than previous regimes in doing anything about it. The policy of creating larger holdings, also no novelty, was faced as always by the difficulty of creating them without dispossessing peasants in the process. According to Bulgariu,

4. See, for example, Aureliu Lapedatu's article, "A Technical Study in Rumanian Cereals," *Correspondance économique roumaine* (April–June, 1938), pp. 1–28, in which the author discussed the manifest advantages of the large Rumanian farms in the use of technical equipment for rational cultivation.

5. The same thing is to be seen in the case of the cooperatives. According to A. Galan, "General Survey of the Co-operative Movement in Rumania," *Correspondance économique roumaine* (January–May, 1939), pp. 1–65, in 1939 one farmer in three was affiliated with one of the several agricultural cooperatives. Unquestionably the other two-thirds included the poorer peasants.

6. Valeriu Bulgariu, "Agrarian Policy in Rumania," *The Banker*, 49 (March, 1939), 344–348.

7. *Ibid.*, p. 346.

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311 433 44 per cent of the forest land, 27 per cent of the orchards, and 37 per cent of the vineyards. Of the area devoted to wheat (as of 1939) it lost 37 per cent, to maize 30 per cent, to sunflower 75 per cent, to hemp 43 per cent, and 86 per cent of the area devoted to soya. The regions, chiefly Bessarabia, in which the new industrial crops had been most intensively cultivated were lost. Finally, the whole economy was put on a war footing, first for Germany and then for Rumania itself.

185 433 Notwithstanding all Carol's laws and decrees, no real solutions were found to the agrarian question. It is illuminating to look through the volumes of the *Enciclopedia României*, published in the last years of Carol's reign as a monument to the Rumanian rebirth. Amid all the fanfare of Rumania's marvelous progress and glowing future, the articles on agriculture and land tenure strike a discordant and often deeply pessimistic note.

To be sure, the trend in the 1930's was toward increasing industrialization as the solution to Rumania's economic difficulties, and in the long run, had the war not intervened, this might have brought beneficial results even to agriculture. As it was, however, much of the industrialization was achieved at the expense of agriculture, and for all its expansion it was neither bringing agriculture any great technical improvements nor beginning to absorb the excess agricultural population. The five-year plan and the laws to rationalize land tenure and consolidate holdings might have provided a healthier foundation for agriculture had they been carried out conscientiously, but there is little evidence that they meant anything more than many previous legislative acts which clutter the Rumanian statute books. It is doubtful whether the peasant would have benefited greatly from a plan ordained by divine providence if it had been left to the Carol administration to execute it. With all its attacks on "outworn" parties and its praise for the younger generation, the Carol dictatorship lacked the stature to be a modernizing dictatorship along the lines of Kemal Ataturk's regime. The new German orientation might have benefited Rumanian agriculture, but given the power relations it is more likely that Rumania would have become the object of an efficient colonial policy.

● 154 Among the social studies undertaken in the period of Carol's dictatorship there was one which makes a fitting conclusion to the Carolist period, and indeed illustrates the failure to master the agrarian question during the interwar years. In the summer and autumn of 1939 a Rumanian research team made a field study of the *plasă* (an administrative unit in a judeţ) Dâmbovnicul, in the south of the

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judeţ of Argeş.[25] This plasă was selected and is of interest for a number of reasons. It lay midway between the Carpathians and the Danube Valley and was in the heart of Wallachia. Having closer communications than many regions with roads leading to the capital, it had long been under the commercial influences which have so profoundly affected Rumanian society; it was not a primitive untouched district but was showing the full effect of what the investigators called "Americanization." Its population was almost entirely Rumanian and almost entirely devoted to agriculture. It lay near Răteşti, the family estate of the Brătianus, and Topoloveni, Mihalache's town, and had consequently received a good deal of attention from the parties in their political campaigns. Hence, Dâmbovnicul, if not the average Rumanian plasă, was an excellent representative of an agricultural community of the Old Kingdom and displayed the principal problems peculiar to Rumania.

What were the conditions in this community in the summer of 1939? Over nine-tenths of the population was engaged in agriculture; in the remaining tenth there were more public officials than merchants, tradesmen, or artisans. Of the 9,400 heads of families, about two-thirds (6,681) were cultivators on their own land or estate owners; 772 worked the land in dijma, that is, under the old crop-sharing tenure; 571 were agricultural day laborers, 144 were farm hands, and only 30 were tenants. About 87 per cent of the land was agricultural; forests which had once been extensive had by this time been reduced below the local needs for firewood and timber. Wheat, maize, and oats occupied almost three-fourths of the arable land.

The density of agricultural population was somewhat below the average for Rumania, but there were just under 70 inhabitants dependent upon agriculture per square kilometer of agricultural land. Evidence of overpopulation was seen in the use of practically all the land for cereals, the small size of exploitations, and in the search for auxiliary sources of income. About 23 per cent of the families had less than one hectare of land, and 56 per cent less than 3 hectares. These small holdings were further subdivided into numerous strips; the properties between one and three hectares, for example, were composed on the average of 6 plots of .3 hectares each. For the level of cultivation in this region, 4–5 hectares were the minimum adequate to feed a family of 4–5 members, but only 22 per cent of the properties were over 5 hectares. Competition for land was intense, the terms for land worked in dijma were becoming increasingly severe,

25. Mihai Pop and A. Golopenţia, *Dâmbovnicul, o plasă din sudul Judeţului Argeş* (Bucarest, 1942).

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proposed measures was very similar to those brought forward repeatedly by various Rumanian governments in the preceding twenty-five years. Great publicity was given to state-operated agricultural machine stations which were to enable the peasant to mechanize his cultivation; from the beginning, however, this measure was regarded as a powerful potential lever in the hands of the state to direct agriculture. The promise of an agricultural machine industry was also a familiar item of earlier programs. Other recognizable projects were land reclamation, the creation of better experimental stations, improved agricultural education, more credit, a vigorous cooperative movement, development of agricultural industries, a scientific land survey, and the encouragement of animal husbandry.[28]

In 1945 the government created a National Cooperative Institute to assist agriculture, but its principal function appears to have been grain collection.[29] In November, 1946, appeared a new organ, REAZIM, an autonomous administration for developing agriculture, animal husbandry, and the use of agricultural machinery. REAZIM took over most of the state functions for agrarian improvement, rationalizing cultivation, supplying seeds and equipment, executing production plans, and managing agricultural machine stations.

Although many of these projects resembled those proposed by earlier regimes, it was obvious that the Communists had no intention of permitting Rumanian agriculture to proceed in its traditional rut. Even in the first phase of ostentatious silence about collective agriculture, the nature of the reforms, or rather the absence of certain reforms, provided an indication of developments to come. In its plans for agricultural improvement, the regime appears to have laid little stress on the desirability of consolidating holdings in private ownership, and the 1948 census showed the fragmentation of properties to be just as extreme as in 1941. The emphasis was upon increasing cereal output through mechanization rather than upon the intensified and diversified cultivation suitable to peasant farming. When, as a consequence of the 1946–47 famine, poor peasants began to sell their holdings, the government took steps to cancel sales to rich farmers. All these moves showed that it had no intention of fostering the growth of an independent, potentially capitalist peasantry on the

28. See, for example, the two pamphlets outlining the government's plans for intensifying livestock raising and for land reclamation: *Intensificarea creşterii animalelor în cadrul refacerii economice* (Bucarest, 1946), and *Îmbunătăţirile funciare în agricultura românească* (Bucarest, 1946).

29. In 1945 INCOOP was granted 57 billion lei for the collection of grain, of which 13 billion was for deliveries to the U.S.S.R., 8 billion to supply Soviet troops, 1 billion to supply the Rumanian army, and 35 billion for the civil population.

231 For the majority of Rumania's peasants the most
433 valuable of all animals are his sheep, of which Greater Rumania possessed about 12,000,000. Both the wool and the meat of Rumanian sheep are, however, of a lower quality than those of Great Britain or New Zealand. Sheep's milk, and the cheese made from it, supplement the monotonous diet of the peasant.

[439] Of the 3,000,000 pigs in Greater Rumania most were kept in the New Territories and a large proportion of the country's pork production was exported. Apart from the Rumanian Mangalita, English Berkshires were bred in great numbers.

241 Considered as a whole the agriculture of Greater Rumania, favoured by good climatic conditions and great soil fertility, remained undeveloped owing to the general economic conditions. The peasantry did not possess the necessary implements, buildings or animals which could have secured profitable ex-
[452] ploitation of the soil. Financial help was difficult to obtain, and the loans that were granted were ruinous to the peasant, owing to the high rate of interest.
[453] Co-operatives were few. Some agricultural banks and associations confined to the German colonists in the Banat and in Transylvania were the only ones
[435] which succeeded. Agricultural prices were low and the peasant was often forced to sell his produce before the harvest to export trusts which dominated
[454] the market. The only assistance given by the government consisted in loans and seeds at reduced prices for the growing of certain crops, such as soya beans, for export in order to fulfil international trade
[439] agreements. During the last fifteen years Germany secured an ever greater influence upon Rumania's agriculture and took most of its exports.

CHAPTER I

228 in private waters. Supplemented by some 4,000 tons of imported fish, this provided nearly 1 kg. (2·2 lb.) per head of population, but, in fact, almost all the fish was consumed by the 5 million persons living in towns. The principal fish caught were sturgeon, carp, pike, eels and crayfish, the main fishing centres being Brăila, Tulcea and Ismail.

6. Food Industries

256 The chief food and agricultural-processing industries are milling, sugar manufacture, oilseed crushing and tobacco curing. While the milling industry was dispersed widely about the country in more than 15,000 small mills employing altogether over 37,000 persons (at 1930 census), the sugar industry was for the most part concentrated in the plain of the Old Kingdom. Of the 17 sugar 257 factories employing 10,000 workers, only one was in the Transylvanian districts lost to Hungary and five in the areas temporarily lost to the U.S.S.R. 258 The vegetable-oil industry, located chiefly in Bessarabia, was only partly carried on in factories, of which there were (on January 1st, 1939) 117, employing 2,026 workers. Among these, 34 were fitted both to extract crude oil and to refine it, six were exclusively refineries, while the remainder produced only crude oil. The rest of the industry consisted of some 2,000 hand, or animal-driven presses mostly owned by individual peasants or by shopkeepers. These primitive presses extracted only a low percentage of oil from the seeds, and consequently the cake—mainly sold for export—had an unusually high oil content. As regards 277 tobacco, both curing and cigarette manufacture [656] were subject to government licence and control. There were 29 factories (in 1930) employing 9,720 workers, but tobacco cultivation subsequently declined, so also doubtless did the numbers employed.

7. Agricultural Organisation

452 The history of the organisation of Rumanian 241 farmers is one of not too successful co-operatives 474 becoming transformed more and more into agencies for the execution of Government Control Schemes. [654] For many years there had been throughout the country a network of agricultural credit societies, co-operative in form but in practice directed by the State. These played an important rôle during the period of the Land Reform in helping the peasants by advances to buy and equip their newly acquired holdings. There was even some co-operative cultivation for a time, until the new peasant-owners could muster sufficient draught animals and implements. Besides this, there have been strong local co-operative unions especially among the [162] minority nationalities—the Hungarians in Transylvania, the Swabian and Saxons in the Banat and the Russian and Polish Jews in the Bucovina.

243 The credit societies revived in importance when, 474 after 1933, the Rumanian Government began the 452 organisation of grain marketing. They became 654 the local agents of a Central Marketing Board through which all sales of grain had to be made both for home consumption and for export. Whereas formerly grain prices slumped immediately after the harvest, most peasants, being obliged to sell their grain quickly, under the new scheme prices were stabilised throughout the year, and this brought a great improvement to peasants' [651] receipts. But the scheme and the societies were also used to collect the peasants' taxes (paid in grain) which did not increase the popularity of co-operation.

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Alongside this organisation the State ran certain technical services for agriculture, distribution of tested seeds, control of weights and measures, provision of bull and stallion services from its own stud farms. This work, however, remained less developed than in other S.E. European countries.

8. Agricultural Exports

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Rumania was the largest grain exporter in Europe. By value, grain accounted for over half the total of agricultural exports. Livestock products, mainly live pigs and cattle, amounted to approximately one-fifth of the total, the remainder consisting of peas, beans, oilseeds, oil and oilcake, eggs and small quantities of fruit. Quantities exported on the average in the years 1935 to 1938 are shown below :—

	*Exports of Principal Agricultural Commodities** *Average 1935-38* ('000 *metric tons*)
Wheat	686
Maize	543
Barley	297
Peas	71
Beans	43
Oilseeds	108
Vegetable oils ..	5
Oilcake	103
Cattle ('000 head) ..	48
Pigs ('000 head) ..	222
Eggs	10

* Pre-1939 frontiers.

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It is of interest to note that, despite German hopes of a development in oilseed cultivation and exports, no increase had been achieved up to the eve of the war. German interest had succeeded in stimulating production and exports of soya beans, but there was no expansion in total oilseed exports owing to a decline in rape seed and to an increase in domestic consumption of oil.

German purchases of Rumanian agricultural exports were increasing in recent pre-war years. In 1939 the territories of Greater Germany took 25 per cent. of the wheat exports, half the feed grain and the bulk of the oilseeds. Italy also took appreciable quantities of grain.

9. Food Consumption

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The Rumanian diet is perhaps the worst-balanced in south-east Europe. The outstanding feature is its high dependence on grain, which provides three-quarters of the calories and 70 per cent. of the protein. In the towns white wheat bread is eaten except by the very poor, whilst in the country wholemeal bread or maize is usual. Over large areas, particularly in the Old Kingdom, maize forms the chief food. (Taking the country as a whole maize consumption is two-thirds higher than wheat.) During the summer months, when work is very heavy, peasant families may eat as much as 3 kg. (6½ lb.) a head daily, almost always in the form of *mămăliga* (a kind of porridge).

The rest of the rural dietary consists chiefly of beans, some potatoes (especially in Transylvania), cabbage, beetroots, carrots, onions and a certain amount of cheese and milk. Consumption of all these foods is much too low by nutritional standards. Meat is rarely eaten, except at Christmas time when a pig is killed—for the rest of the year small amounts of fat salted pork are used, more or less as a flavouring. Some fish is eaten in villages near rivers. Vegetable oils—mainly sunflower—and pig fats are used for cooking; butter is rarely eaten.